CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, California 95814

(916) 657-2666
FAX **(916) 654-9780**

April 21, 1997

Water Quality Technical Group

Dear Water Quality Technical Group Member:

I am sorry you were unable to attend the April 1, 1997 meeting of the Water Quality Technical Group. I felt it was a productive meeting, primarily because of the excellent presentations by Elaine Archibald, Dan Nelson, Steve Murrill, Tom Mumley, Joan Patton, Glen Birdzell, and Darell Slotton. A number of those who attended have since let me know they also enjoyed the presentations. I take this opportunity to thank each of them.

At future meetings of the Water Quality Technical Group we intend to provide further opportunities for experts to present information to more fully educate all of us on water quality issues and problems. Unfortunately, however, due to a budget shortfall, **we have had to cancel the June 4, 1997 meeting of the Water Quality Technical Group**. We do intend to invite speakers to the next scheduled meeting on August 6, 1997.

Enclosed are the meeting handout packets, along with minutes of the meeting and materials provided by the speakers.

The schedule of CALFED activities is accelerating, and it continues to be very important that our stakeholders be fully informed and involved in the process. Because we are presently unable to continue the planned meeting schedule, it will be necessary to adopt other approaches to maintaining contact. It is my intention to correspond with you to accomplish our basic communications needs. It will be my objective to notify you of all significant developments and events in time for you to maintain awareness and to become involved.

For your information, the following is a description of the current activities of the water quality team. Currently, the list of Water Quality Technical Group members numbers about 125. Because of the relatively large size of the group, we formed the Parameter Assessment Team that includes about 18 of the WQTG members to help us with specific technical issues such as identifying water quality targets, recommending mathematical modeling approaches, and recommending priorities for water quality actions. The members possess specialized technical expertise and represent agricultural, municipal, industrial, and environmental interests. As a subset of the WQTG, the findings and recommendations of the PAT will be submitted to the WQTG at large for their review and comment prior to being incorporated into the process. Though we want to keep the PAT small enough to be able to provide us with rapid response to technical questions, there is room for additional participants if there are others who can make a valuable technical contribution. Please call me if you wish to be added. Selection for membership on this team will be based on our needs for specific expertise and balance of interests among the stakeholder groups.

Sixteen storage and conveyance configurations have been developed to serve as the basis for developing alternatives for impact analysis. These are permutations of the three Delta alternatives being considered: Minimal structural changes in the Delta; through-Delta, including Delta structural changes; and, Dual Conveyance involving Delta channel modifications and a partially isolated channel. The sixteen are intended to represent a reasonable range of facility operations and facility sizes, including surface and ground water storage facilities North of the Delta, in the Delta, in the San Joaquin River watershed, and off-aqueduct South of the Delta.

When combined with ecosystem restoration, water quality, levee strengthening, and water use efficiency actions, the sixteen storage and conveyance configurations will become alternatives for impact analysis. The sixteen alternatives are being formulated at the present time, and it is the task of the water quality team to incorporate the water quality program into these alternatives.

Through previous effort in the Water Quality Technical Group, some 32 water quality actions were identified that, when implemented, were expected to improve water quality in the Bay-Delta estuary and in upstream areas where there are species dependent on the estuary. As the Programmatic alternatives are constructed, it will be necessary to reformulate the action statements in a manner that is consistent with the Programmatic document. Water quality actions that are method-specific will need to be revised such that actions will describe what will be accomplished, where it will be accomplished, but not necessarily how it will be accomplished. One might, for example, present an action to the effect that toxic metals from abandoned mines in a certain area would be controlled by one of several means, such as treatment, capping, and rerouting watercourses. The specific means of accomplishing the action would be chosen in Phase III (Implementation Phase) of the CALFED process as a result of further investigation and preparation of project-specific environmental documentation.

We anticipate being able to soon provide you with draft alternatives for your review and comment. These will be sent to you at the earliest possible moment.

Impact analysis is due for completion in about eleven weeks. Therefore, although the alternatives for analysis are not yet formulated, we cannot wait to begin this work. Accordingly, the water quality team has begun identifying generalized impacts of the water quality actions that would be included in the alternatives, the impacts of other CALFED actions (ecosystem restoration, levee strengthening), and the water quality effects associated with the various storage and conveyance combinations. When the alternatives are fully formulated, more detailed impact analysis will be performed.

In conjunction with impact analysis, and continuing into Phase III of the program, prefeasibility analyses will be performed to determine which proposed actions are actually feasible for accomplishment. At the present time, we are developing loading information to identify the most important sources of pollutants in the system, with a view toward prioritizing actions to address the most important problems. As the program develops, we intend to continue identifying and evaluating sources of information to determine the most cost effective approaches for accomplishing water quality actions.

Please call me at (916) 653-5422 if you have questions, comments, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Rick Woodard, Manager
Water Quality Program

Enclosures